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Advice as to the placing at public or private sale of art work of all kinds, pictures, sculptures, furniture, bibelots, etc., will be given at the office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS, and also counsel as to the value of art works and the obtaining of the best "expert" opinion on the same. For these services a nominal fee will be charged. Persons having art works and desirous of disposing or obtaining an idea of their value will find our service on these lines a saving of time, and, in many instances, of unnecessary expense. It is guaranteed that any opinion given will be so given without regard to personal or commercial motives.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

SUMMER ISSUES.

After this issue the AMERICAN ART NEWS will be published, as usual during the summer, monthly until Saturday, October 13, next, when the weekly issues will be resumed, and a new volume will begin.

The regular monthly summer issues will be published on Saturdays, June 16, July 14, August 18 and September 15.

TO "A SUBSCRIBER."

[If the writer of the letter signed "A Subscriber for Several Years" will kindly send us, in confidence, his name and address, we will be pleased to reply to him personally.—Ed.]

The Detroit Museum, according to its Bulletin, is planning to acquire by popular subscription a fine example of the work of Gaston La Touche. The title is "Hallali," the cry that calls huntsmen to the final scene.

A painting depicting Abraham Lincoln life size, as he stood upon the platform, engaged in one of his debates with Stephen A. Douglas, was recently completed by Robert M. Root, of Shelbyville, Ill. The painting will be hung in the Shelby county court house.

ART SUIT'S DRAMATIC CLOSE.

The sensational and remarkable ending on Wednesday last in London, of the interesting case of Huntington vs. Lewis and Simmons, and which is fully told in our news columns, proves again, if former proof were wanting, the falsity of the popular belief in the infallibility of art "experts." After some days' trial, and the testimony of some of the best known artists, art writers and critics, and Museum Directors in the United Kingdom, for and against Romney's authorship of the now famous double portrait of Mrs. Siddons and her sister Fanny Kemble (reproduced on another page of this issue), the unexpected submission by the defendants' attorneys of the original sketch for the picture by the celebrated early English miniaturist and portrait painter, Orazio Humphrey (a sketch of whose career appears elsewhere in our columns), and which proved Humphrey, the friend and contemporary of Romney, to be the painter of the picture in controversy, settled the case at once.

When the suit was first brought in October, 1915, we said in the course of a long editorial on the subject, written in the general interest of the art trade and collectors, in part as follows:

"The absence of motive to defraud and in the case in question, the seeming impossibility of belief that an old and reputable art firm, would be so foolish, to say the least, as to wilfully and knowingly attempt to defraud a wealthy collector and a valued patron and to hazard the loss of his most desirable custom, and the further fact that, probably much against their will, they are contesting the suit to uphold their action and reputation, should, in our opinion, and without any reflection upon or disrespect to Mr. Huntington, who has come to think himself deceived and is naturally aggrieved thereby, gain for them the sympathy of all reputable dealers, who may, any day, find themselves in a similar position, and through no fault of their own."

"The occurrence is regrettable because it tends to disturb the minds of many American art lovers and collectors, who argue that if so prominent, and presumably so intelligent and well-informed a collector as Mr. Huntington could have been deceived in so notable a picture, and so long established and reputable a house as Lewis and Simmons, could also have been deceived as to the validity of a work by such a master as Romney—of what avail are study and knowledge on the part of a collector, and of what service are the guarantees of even leading and reputable art firms?"

"And yet, it seems to us, that there is not, and should not be any real cause for such a feeling or conclusion, from this incident, on the part of art lovers or collectors."

"The good faith of the sellers of this canvas, it also seems to us, cannot be questioned, and this being the case, and with any suspicion of dishonesty or fraud on their part eliminated, the art world can the more calmly watch the trial of the suit and draw valuable lessons from its progress and result. It is unbelievable that a house like Lewis and Simmons would purposely sell and for so large an amount, to such a collector, as Mr. Huntington, a picture they knew to be spurious, or, in the vernacular, a 'Fake.' To put the case on a low plane they are certainly not fools."

"We understand that Lewis and Simmons had the best possible advice from the best known authorities in England on the work of Romney, on the canvas, and which authorities they will presumably produce as witnesses when the suit is tried, before they even offered the picture to Mr. Huntington. The picture was seen and admired while it hung in the Metropolitan Club in this city by dealers, critics and art lovers, and not questioned—and this would seem to endorse their own judgment and that of the authorities they consulted upon the validity of the work. We hold no brief for Lewis and Simmons, and we argue solely from the statements published, and other information in our possession, not obtained from them."

The result of the case would seem to entirely prove the correctness of our judgment, when it was first brought in 1915. While the defend-

ants have lost, they have lost with honor, for the result in no way brings with it any reflection upon their good faith or honesty of dealing. They did not sell Mr. Huntington a "fake" or "bogus" picture, but one which they had every reason to believe was the work of Romney. When so many and prominent so-called "experts" and authorities as they produced to testify to the validity of the picture, could be so deceived, as to its authorship, why should the defendants be blamed? And the picture is proven to be the work—not of some unknown artist or clever forger or imitator—but that of one of the most illustrious of English miniature painters and a painter also of large oil portraits of renown.

A mistaken attribution, and a most honestly mistaken one, does not convict anyone of fraud or dishonesty. Dr. Bode, the eminent Berlin art authority "went wrong" on the Leonardo da Vinci bust, and even Messrs. Ward and Roberts, who were really responsible for the selling of the picture as by Romney to Mr. Huntington can afford to smile and mention Dr. Bode.

THE COMING ART TARIFF.

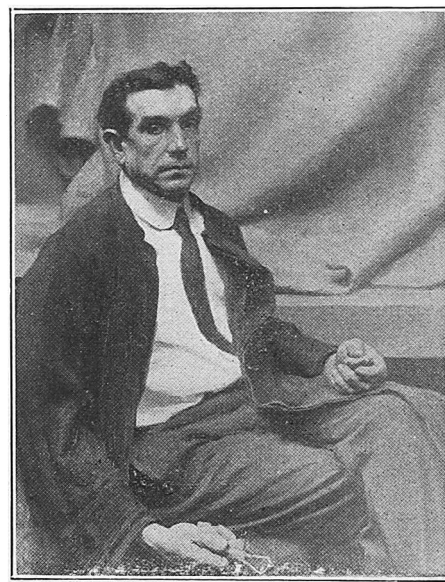
We give much and deserved space in this, our last weekly issue, to the presentation of the varying views of the New York dealers on the tariff of 10%, which Congress proposes and, as it now looks, will almost certainly impose on all imported art works, old and modern, and of each and every description.

The argument advanced by those dealers who favor and those who oppose the proposed duty, have a strangely familiar sound, and it is significant that a rereading of the same discussion, when the duty was virtually removed a few years ago—proves that those who are now quoted as for or against such duty have not changed their views on the matter one iota.

Only one new note, and that one of patriotism enters into the discussion of an art duty at the present juncture, and the striking of this note, even by some of those who are opposed to a duty on general principles—is creditable to them.

We notice that Mr. Robert W. De Forest, President of the Metropolitan Museum, and who was one of the leaders in the fight for free art when the duty was finally removed—has not changed his convictions, and at the banquet of the annual Federation of Arts Convention in Washington last week—expressed himself adversely to the proposed duty. The Federation would seem to have lost a real opportunity for practical service to the art interests of the country in not devoting more time and taking up more vigorously the subject of an art duty, and in not deciding on some definite course of action regarding the matter, and its time would seemingly have been far better devoted to this most important of questions than to the reading of and listening to long papers, mostly on Academic subjects. But organizations like the Art Federation are seldom practical.

OBITUARY.



BELA L. PRATT
Portrait by Howard E. Smith

Bela Lyon Pratt, in the first rank of modern American sculptors, died in Boston, May 19 last, following an illness that began with a heart attack in April. A few days ago he became seriously ill.

Mr. Pratt, was 49 years old, a native of Norwich, Conn., and had been an instructor in modelling in the Boston Museum since 1893. In the last fifteen years he produced many works in sculpture including groups, tablets, busts and medallions. He was a member of the National Academy of Arts and the National Sculpture Society.

His more recent works include the symbolic figures of "Science and Art" which flank the main entrance to the Boston Public Library; the statue of Edward Everett Hale in the Boston Public Garden and a statue of Nathan Hale on the Yale campus. For the Congressional Library at Washington he designed six seven-foot spandrel figures, a twelve foot figure of "Philosophy" and a series of four medallions, "The Seasons." The most ambitious of his creations were the two colossal groups on the peristyle at the Chicago World's Fair.

Perhaps his best known work, and one that brought him deserved fame, is his statue of Nathan Hale at Yale.

Mr. Charles H. Dorr, in an article in the "Architectural Record," June, 1914, gives the following interesting details of the late sculptor's life:

"The artistic career of Bela Pratt dates almost from his early childhood. He entered the Yale School of Fine Arts at the age of sixteen, and later became a member of the Art Students' League, where he studied with the American masters, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and William M. Chase. While a pupil in the Art League, he also received instructions from Saint-Gaudens in the studio of the famous American sculptor, and in 1890, the young artist joined the art colony in Paris, where he was enrolled in the Beaux Arts. He also studied with Falguière, and while abroad received several medals and prizes. In summing up the work of Bela Pratt and his various examples of decorative sculpture, it may be said, that his sculpture possesses the merit of the Classic type, but is far removed from the Academic. He is gifted with unusual feeling for his subjects, has imagination and is a subtle draughtsman. His art accords him a foremost place with the illustrious American sculptors of today."

Marchesa de Medici (Edith Story).

The Marchesa Peruzzi de Medici died in Florence, Italy last week. She was Miss Edith Story, sister of Julian Story, and when a girl was taken abroad by her father, the late William Wetmore Story, the sculptor, and has since lived in Italy.

The Marchesa was born in Boston in 1847 and was the granddaughter of the late Chief Justice Joseph Story. About forty-five years ago Miss Story married the Marchese, who directly descended from Catherine de Medici. She was survived by one son, the Marchese de Medici, who was wounded in the war.

John de Yongh.

John De Yongh, portrait painter, committed suicide in his home at New Rochelle, Monday last.

Mr. De Yongh was sixty-one years old, and was not married. He painted portraits in oil, one of William H. Taft, reproduced extensively in his first Presidential campaign.

Julius H. Baumer.

Julius H. Baumer, a painter resident in Chicago since 1869, is dead, aged 69 years. He was born in Muenster, Westphalia. Among his paintings is a "Lord's Supper."